

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 COPENHAGEN 0041

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT DA

SUBJECT: GENERAL ELECTION NO 8 IDEOLOGY

REF: COPENHAGEN 0029

SUMMARY: THE CURRENT ELECTION IN DENMARK HAS SPECIAL
SIGNIFICANCE IN THE LONG-TERM CONFRONTATION BETWEEN
SOCIALISMAND LIBERAL CAPITALISM IN SCANDINAVIA. WITH
SCANDINAVIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRACY AT A TURNING POINT IN ITS
HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT, PRIMIN POUL HARTLINGS LIBERAL
PARTY IS SEEKING A CONSOLIDATION OF THE NON-SOCIALIST
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PARTIES AND INTEREST ORGANIZATIONS IN AN EFFORT TO

"TURN THE CORNER" ON SOCIALISM IN DENMARK. END SUMMARY

1. SCANDINAVIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRACY IS CURRENTLY AT A TURNING POINT IN ITS HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT. TRADITIONAL NORDIC "WELFARE-SOCIALISM" CONCERNED ESPECIALLY WITH THE DISTRIBUTION SIDE OF THE ECONOMIC SYSTEM HAS PRETTY MUCH RUN AGROUND AS THE TAX BURDEN INVOLVED IN SUPPORTING AN EVER-LARGER PUBLIC SECTOR HAS OUTSTRIPPED THE MARGINAL UTILITY OF ADDITIONAL SOCIAL BENEFITS. THE NORDIC SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES CONSEQUENTLY HAVE IN RECENT YEARS UNDERTAKEN A FUNDAMENTAL SHIFT IN ORIENTATION TO "INDUSTRIAL-SOCIALISM" IN PROPOSALS SUCH AS THE DANISH PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY AND IN SWEDISH AND NORWEGIAN PROPOSALS FOR INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY. WHILE GRADUAL AND DEMOCRATIC (ADOPTION BY PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY IS REQUIRED) THESE PLANS FOR THE FIRST TIME AIM AT AN EVENTUAL GENERAL SOCIALIZATION OF THE OWNERSHIP OF THE MEANS OF PRODUCTION IN THE RESPECTIVE NORDIC COUNTRIES.

2. THIS BASIC SHIFT IN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC IDEOLOGY CONSTITUTES AN IMPORTANT UNDERLYING ELEMENT IN THE CURRENT DANISH ELECTION. THE COUNTERVAILING ELEMENT-ELECTIONS ARE ALWAYS CONFRONTATIONS IS THE ATTEMPT BY PRIME MINISTER POUL HARTLING TO CREATE A POLITICAL FORCE SUFFICIENTLY COHESIVE TO PRESERVE A LIBERAL-CAPITALIST SYSTEM IN DENMARK AND IF POSSIBLE TO DIVERT SOCIAL DEMOCRACY FROM ITS MORE RADICAL COURSE.

3. THE ORIGIN OF THIS IDEOLOGICAL CONFRONTATION LIES IN THE REALIGNMENT IN 1966 OF THE PARTY ALLIANCES WHICH HAD DOMINATED DANISH POLITICS SINCE THE THIRTIES, A REALIGNMENT IN WHICH HARTLING PERSONALLY PLAYED A SEMINAL ROLE. THE TRADITIONAL PATTERN OF ALLIANCES SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND RADICALS VERSUS LIBERALS AND CONSERVATIVES FELL PART IN 1966 WHEN THE NOVEMBER ELECTION PRODUCED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN DANISH HISTORY A SOCIALIST MAJORITY (SOCIAL DEMOCRATS (SDP)-70, SOCIALIST PEOPLES PARTY (SPP)-20 IN THE 179-SEAT PARLIAMENT) ALREADY IN 1965 WHEN HE BECAME LIBERAL PARTY CHAIRMAN HARTLING FORESAW THAT A SOCIALIST MAJORITY WOULD ALIENATE THE RADICALS. REJECTING THEREFORE HIS PREDECESSOR'S ALREADY WELL ADVANCED PLAN FOR A UNIFICATION OF THE LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE PARTIES, HARTLING PROPOSED INSTEAD IN A NOTEWORTHY SPEECH IN AUGUST 1965

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AN ALLIANCE OF ALL THREE NON-SOCIALIST PARTIES. THIS PROPOSAL MATURED DURING THE SUCCEEDING TWO YEARS 1966-68 WHILE THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT OF JENS OTTO KRAG MOVED TO THE LEFT. THE SDP FORMALIZED ITS PARLIAMENTARY ALLIANCE WITH THE SOCIALIST PEOPLES PARTY IN A JOINT COMMITTEE IMMEDIATELY DUBBED THE "RED CABINET" AND THE DANISH TRADE UNION FEDERATION (LO) PUBLISHED ITS INITIAL ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY PROPOSAL (1967) IN 1968 THE RADICALS ACCEPTED HARTLING OFFER ALTHOUGH EXTRACT-

ING THE CONCESSION THAT THEIR HILMAR BAUNSGAARD SHOULD BE PRIME MINISTER AND THE CONSERVATIVE LIBERAL RADICAL GOVERNMENT OF 1968-71 COMPLETED THE REALIGNMENT OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES INTO THE PRESENT SOCIALIST AND NON SOCIALIST BLOCS.

4. THE THREE-PARTY GOVERNMENT HOWEVER DID NOT WORK AS AN EFFECTIVE COUNTERVAILING FORCE TO SOCIALISM. THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION WAS ABLE TO PLAY OFF ONE PARTY AGAINST THE OTHER. THERE WERE ALSO STRAINS BETWEEN THE CONSERVATIVES INTEREST ORGANIZATIONS (THE EMPLOYERS FEDERATION) AND THAT OF THE LIBERALS (THE AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL) MOREOVER IN THE 1971 ELECTIONS THE RADICAL PARTY SCORED SUBSTANTIAL GAINS AT THE EXPENSE OF ITS TWO ALLIES, WHILE THE SOCIALIST PARTIES WITH THE HELP OF ONE GREENLAND MP, REGAINED THEIR MAJORITY POSITION. HARTLING MADE THAT LESSON THE BASIS OF HIS PRESENT STRATEGY HIS GRAND DESIGN.

5. HARTLING IS CONVINCED THAT ONLY A CONSOLIDATION OF NON-SOCIALIST POLITICAL FORCES-A SINGLE RIGHT OF CENTER PARTY REPRESENTING BOTH THE EMPLOYERS AND THE FARMERS INTEREST ORGANIZATIONS CAN SERVE AS AN EFFECTIVE COUNTERFORCE TO DANISH SOCIAL DEMOCRACY. CONSEQUENTLY HIS FIRST OBJECTIVE IS TO MAKE THE LIBERAL PARTY THE CORE OF THAT NEW CONSOLIDATED PARTY. IT WAS FOR THIS REASON THAT HE ESTABLISHED HIS ONE PARTY MINORITY GOVERNMENT LAST DECEMBER IT IS FOR THIS REASON ALSO THAT HE IS ATTEMPTING TO OBSORB HIS ALLIES IN THE LIBERAL CENTER OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM: THE CENTER DEMOCRATS THE JUSTICE PARTY AND EVENTUALLY THE CHRISTIANS THE RADICALS AND THE CONSERVATIVES. THE FIRST TWO MAY WELL DISAPPEAR IN THIS ELECTION, AND HARTLING BELIEVES THAT THE RADICAL PARTY WHICH DOES NOT REPRESENT ANY SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP, WILL BECOME INCREASINGLY SUPERFLOUS AS THE ESSENTIAL POLITICAL STRUGGLE BECOME ONE BETWEEN SOCIALIST AND CAPITALIST ECONOMIC

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INTEREST ORGANIZATIONS. AS FOR THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY IT HAS ALREADY BLED ITSELF CLOSE TO DEATH WITH FACTIONAL STRIFE.

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6. MORE IMPORTANT IN THIS CONNECTION IS HIS SECOND OBJECTIVE TO WIN THE BACKING OF THE EMPLOYERS FEDERATIONS. IN THIS HARTLING HAS MADE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS. LEADING PARTY OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED IN IMPORTANT POSTS IN THE LARGE DANISH MULTINATIONAL CORPORATION, THE EAST ASIATIC COMPANY AND IN THE FEDERATION OF DANISH INDUSTRIES(THE DANISH COUNTERPART TO THE NAM) THE PARTY IS RECEIVING UNDERSTANDING AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE COMPANY FROM MOST OF THE EMPLOYER FEDERATIONS. ONLY THE FEDERATION OF EMPLOYERS IN THE METAL TRADES AND THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REMAIN FORTRESSES OF CONSERVATIVE LOYALTY. ACCORDING TO A RELIABLE SOURCE IN THE DANISH EMPLOYERS CONFEDERATION THE LIBERALS NEED ONLY A CONFIDENTIAL

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SOLID VICTORY TO CONSOLIDATE BACKING FROM THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY.

7. HARTLINGS SUCCESS WITH THE INTEREST ORGANIZATIONS IS DUE TO THE THIRD OBJECTIVE IN HIS DESIGN, HIS ATTEMPT TO FORCE THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY TO ABANDON ITS ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY PROPOSAL AND IN EFFECT ITS NEW RADICAL ORIENTATIONS. HARTLING UNDERSTOOD VERY EARLY THAT THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

WOULD BE SEVERLY WEAKENED DURING THE TRANSITION TO THE NEW ORIENTATIONS. (THE SDP'S PARLIAMENTARY GROUP IS STILL DEEPLY DIVIDED ON THAT ISSUE, AND THE PARTY'S RANK AND FILE MEMBERSHIP HAS NOT YET EITHER UNDERSTOOD OR ACCEPTED THE ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY PLAN) ADAPTING HIS CAMPAIGN TACTICS TO EXPLOIT THIS WEAKNESS HARTLING ANNOUNCED VERY EARLY THAT HE WAS OPEN TO POST ELECTION COOPERATION WITH A "RESPONSIBLE" SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY BUT THAT THE LIBERALS COULD NOT ACCEPT SDP LEADER ANKER JORGENSEN AS PRIME MINISTER NOR ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY (WHICH JORGENSEN HAS COME TO SYMBOLIZE WITHIN THE SDP) AS PART OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC (INCOME POLICY) CRISIS PLAN. BY DIRECTING CAMPAIGN PRIMARILY AGAINST JORGENSEN HARTLING HAS SUCCEEDED IN WIDENING THE INTERNAL DIVISION WITHIN THE SDP AND IN SETTING THE STAGE FOR JORGENSEN'S RESIGNATION, IF THE PARTY DOES NOT DO WELL IN THE ELECTION.

8. THE CURRENT ELECTION WILL NOT BE THE DECISIVE ONE "TURNING THE CORNER" ON SOCIALISM IN DENMARK. IT MAY HOWEVER PROVE TO BE A MAJOR MILEPOST IN THAT PROCESS IF IT (A) RESULTS IN A SUFFICIENT SET-BACK TO THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS TO COMPEL A RE-CONSIDERATION OF THEIR PRESENT COMMITMENT TO ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY OR IF IT (B) INITIATES THE TRANSITION TOWARD A SYSTEM DOMINATED BY TWO LARGE PARTIES.

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